


Study permits: Designated learning institutions

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This section contains policy, procedures and guidance used by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada staff. It is posted on the Department's website as a courtesy to stakeholders.

As per paragraph 216(e) of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations* (IRPR), the issuance of study permits is limited to applicants who have been accepted to undertake a program of study at an educational institution that is designated to host international students (i.e., a designated learning institution [DLI]).

Therefore, study permit applications, including renewals, received (online) or postmarked (paper) on or after June 1, 2014, must include a letter of acceptance issued by a DLI.

Section R211.1 provides the definition of a DLI:

- all primary and secondary institutions in Canada, which are automatically designated, unless the province or territory in which they are located has entered into an agreement or arrangement with the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in order to designate specific educational institutions;
- at the post-secondary level, educational institutions designated by provinces and territories for the purpose of hosting international students (an evergreen list of DLIs at the post-secondary level is available on the IRCC website);
- learning institutions that are administered by a federal department or agency.

Exceptions

The following foreign nationals are not required to attend a DLI:

- applicants who are exempt from the letter of acceptance requirement under paragraph R219(2)(a); and
- applicants who are eligible to apply to renew their study permits to complete their course or program of study at a non-DLI (i.e., where the transitional provisions apply).

DLI number

A new list of DLIs at the post-secondary level is available in the Global Case Management System (GCMS). Unless the applicant is applying to renew a study permit under the transitional provisions, officers must not use the list under *Educational institution* to process applications received or postmarked on or after June 1, 2014. Instead, officers must use the internal DLIs list.

“DLI number” is the external term used for *Organization ID* in GCMS. This number is assigned to a post-secondary institution once IRCC receives confirmation of its designation status from its provincial or territorial ministry of education. A list of all DLIs at the post-secondary level, along with their respective DLI numbers, is available on the [IRCC website](#). A DLI number (*Organization ID*) can be found in GCMS under the *Organizations & Entities* tab; *Type = Organization*; *Sub Type = Designated learning institution*.

As of June 1, 2014, DLIs are strongly encouraged to include their DLI number on the letters of acceptance and letters of enrolment issued, as applicants destined to an educational institution at the post-secondary level are asked to include a valid DLI number on their study permit application form [IMM 1294] and on their application to change conditions, extend their stay or remain in Canada as a student [IMM 5709].

Exceptions (applicants not required to attend a DLI): applicants who are exempt from the letter of acceptance requirement under [paragraph R219\(2\)\(a\)](#) and applicants who are eligible to apply to renew their study permits to complete their course or program of study at a non-DLI (i.e., where the [transitional provisions](#) apply).

Identifying and entering DLIs in processing systems

Applications processed at overseas and inland offices

Primary and secondary institutions

Officers may enter the name of the institution or school district in the *Designated learning institution* field in GCMS (available as of June 14, 2014). All institutions at primary and secondary levels are automatically designated [[R211.1\(a\)\(iv\)](#)], unless the province or territory in which they are located has entered into an agreement or arrangement with the Minister of IRCC to designate specific educational institutions.

In some cases, the names of primary and secondary schools contain the word “college”. If officers are unsure of the level of education provided by these institutions, they must contact the Operational Management and Coordination Branch (OMC). When processing the applications of students destined to secondary schools with “college” in the school name, officers must ensure the level of education selected is “secondary”. Primary and secondary schools do not require a DLI number.

Post-secondary institutions

As of June 1, 2014, officers **must** associate the appropriate DLI number with the study permit application, including renewals.

To search for a DLI and find the DLI number in GCMS, officers can query under the *Organizations & Entities* tab by either:

- entering the DLI number (*Organization ID* in GCMS) under the *Organizations & Entities*

tab; or

- selecting *Organization* under *Type* and *Designated learning institution* under *Sub Type*, and typing in the name of the institution in the *Name* field.

Corrections

If an officer finds that an applicant has incorrectly selected a field (e.g., under level of study “CEGEP – Technical” instead of “Career College” for a DLI), the officer should correct the GCMS record.

Family members

Pursuant to paragraph R219(2)(a), the family member of a foreign national whose application for a work permit or study permit is approved in writing before the foreign national enters Canada is eligible for an open study permit (i.e., not attached to a DLI [letter of acceptance exempt]). The duration of the family member’s study permit must be same as the duration of the work or study permit issued to the principal applicant.

In GCMS, a file cannot be closed unless it is associated with a DLI. In order to close files of spouses, common-law partners and dependent children intending to study at the post-secondary level, an *Organization ID* record has been created. Officers must proceed as follows:

- *Organization ID*: O110784297221 (*DLI name*: Open Study Permit)
- *Level of Study*: Not applicable
- *Compliance Verification*: Not Required
- *Other Description*: Family member

The above organization identification number must be used to finalize these cases in GCMS, and the *Compliance Verification* field must be set to “Not Required” to prevent the issuance of compliance reporting requests for students who are not subject to subsection R220.1(1).

If the family member submits a letter of acceptance confirming enrolment at a DLI, the organization identification number of the DLI may be used to finalize the case in GCMS. However, the *Compliance Verification* field must be set to “Not Required”.

Scenarios

An applicant provides the correct DLI number for their institution on the application form [IMM 1294 or IMM 5709], and this number exists in GCMS.

- For applications that include the 2D barcode page and are received online or uploaded via a visa application centre (VAC), the system automatically links the DLI number to the application. Officers must verify that the DLI number provided by the applicant is the correct one associated with the DLI on the letter of acceptance.
- For manually created applications (e.g., paper applications completed by hand), officers

must query and manually associate the DLI with the application.

An applicant provides an invalid DLI number or does not provide a DLI number on the application form but has a letter of acceptance from a DLI.

- For applications that include the 2D barcode page and are received online or uploaded via a VAC, the *School* field in GCMS is blank. Therefore, officers must query and manually associate the application with the appropriate DLI number (*Organizational ID*) under the *Organizations & Entities* tab (*Sub Type = Designated learning institution* in GCMS) and link it to the application. This also associates the student with the institution responsible for compliance reporting.
- For manually created applications (e.g., paper applications completed by hand), officers must query and manually associate the application with the appropriate DLI number (*Organizational ID*) under the *Organizations and Entities* tab (*Sub Type = Designated learning institution* in GCMS) and link it to the application. This also associates the student with the institution responsible for compliance reporting.

An applicant submits a letter of acceptance from a DLI, but the DLI number has not been created in GCMS.

While all DLIs should be assigned a DLI number and registered in GCMS, officers should consult the DLIs list on the [IRCC website](#) before finalizing the file. If additional verification is still necessary, officers may contact OMC.

Applications processed at the port of entry (POE)

Important: DLI numbers are not available in the Field Operations Support System (FOSS).

For study permit applications processed overseas, the DLI number should already be associated with the file. To print a study permit that is processed overseas, border services officers at a POE must ensure that *Designated learning institution* is inserted under the *Institution Name* section of the physical study permit.

Border services officers must also select one of the following under the *Field of Study* section of the physical study permit:

- Any Primary or Secondary Institution;
- Any Designated Learning Institution;
- Any Post-Secondary Learning Institution.

For study permit applications processed at a POE, until the transition to GCMS at POEs is complete, officers must

1. verify the designation status of the post-secondary institution by checking it against the list of DLIs available on the [IRCC website](#);
2. verify if the designation status is confirmed and select *Designated learning institution* as the institution name from the CEMS Table 050 – Institution; and

3. select one of the following under the *Field of Study* section of the physical study permit :
 - o Any Primary or Secondary Institutional;
 - o Any Designated Learning Institution;
 - o Any Post-Secondary Learning Institution.

Loss of designation

Provinces and territories inform OMC's Temporary Resident Program Delivery Division (TRPD) of changes or updates to the designation status of learning institutions. The changes are then captured in GCMS and on the [DLIs list](#).

If a learning institution has lost its designated status (whether it is temporarily suspended or permanently revoked), the **Organization/Entity** screen will show its status as **Inactive**, along with the date of de-designation.

Officers must verify the date the school lost its designated status and compare it to the application reception date.

De-designation before the study permit application was submitted

A study permit will not be issued for an applicant to attend a non-DLI, unless the applicant is subject to the transitional provisions.

The application should be refused.

If there are other concerns or refusal grounds, officers may include them as part of their refusal rationale.

No refund is applicable.

De-designation after the study permit application was submitted

As the de-designation is new information that was not included in the applicant's initial submission and the application would otherwise be approved, a procedural fairness letter should be sent to the applicant. The letter should inform the applicant of the following options:

1. provide a new letter of acceptance for a new DLI;
2. withdraw their application; or
3. take no action, in which case the application will be assessed using the information provided in the initial application, which will result in a refusal.

If a new letter of acceptance is submitted for a DLI and the applicant meets all other requirements under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) and IRPR, processing of the application may continue with the new DLI information.

If the applicant chooses to withdraw their application, the application may be withdrawn.

If the applicant does not provide a new letter of acceptance and does not withdraw their

application, the application will be processed using the initial letter of acceptance for a non-DLI and should therefore be refused. If there are other concerns or refusal grounds, officers may include them as part of their refusal rationale.

Where an application would have been refused on other grounds, regardless of the institution (insufficient proof of funds, criminality, etc.), the visa officer does not need to send a procedural fairness letter to address the de-designation issue. However, notes in GCMS should be clear on this point, and the refusal letter must include the failure to meet subsection R220.1(1).

No refund is applicable, whether the application is refused or withdrawn.^{[Footnote 1](#)}

Loss of designation status after the issuance of a study permit [R220.1(2)]

If a learning institution loses its designation status after the issuance of the study permit, the student may

- continue to study at that institution until their study permit becomes invalid; or
- transfer to an alternative DLI.

The student may not apply for a study permit renewal to extend their attendance at that institution.

Transitional provisions

A foreign national who already has a study permit or who applies for a study permit before June 1, 2014,

- may continue to study in Canada to complete their program of study until the end of the validity period of their study permit, regardless of whether the institution is designated as of June 1;
- may apply to renew their study permit from within Canada for the purpose of completing their program of study (until June 1, 2017) if they are attending a non-DLI; and
- must be actively pursuing their course or program of study while they are in Canada. This means that study permit holders in Canada must make continuous progress towards completing their program of study.

Note: Foreign nationals who already have a study permit or who applied for a study permit before June 1, 2014, may continue to attend an educational institution that has not been designated as of June 1, 2014, in order to complete their program of study. They may not, however, apply to renew their study permit in order to transfer to another program of study or transfer to another non-DLI.

In order to finalize these cases, a DLI number is required in GCMS

Officers must proceed as follows:

- *Organization ID*: O110784297221 (*DLI name*: Open Study Permit)
- *Level of Study*: Not applicable
- *Compliance Verification*: Not Required
- *Other Description*: Non-DLI

Officers must also include a note explaining the study permit is issued under the transitional provisions.

The above organization identification number must be used to finalize these cases in GCMS, and the *Compliance Verification* field must be set to “Not Required” to prevent the issuance of compliance reporting requests for students who are affected by the transitional measures.

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